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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/577,822	04/28/2006	Takao Wada	P1549US	2798
1218	7590	03/06/2009		
CASELLA & HESPOS 274 MADISON AVENUE NEW YORK, NY 10016			EXAMINER STEPHENS, JACQUELINE F	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3761	
			MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
			03/06/2009	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/577,822

Applicant(s)

WADA, TAKAO

Examiner

Jacqueline F. Stephens

Art Unit

3761

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 05 December 2008.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 4-10 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 4-10 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-8508)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____

- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

1. Applicant's arguments filed 12/5/08 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant argues Reising shows a stretchable elastic feature 18 on the back waist region and abdominal regions, therefore the regions when stretched would be approximately the same length. However, Reising teaches the stretchable waist can be present on the front, back, or both waist regions (col. 6, lines 31-41). In the case of the waistband 18 present in the back region, the back region is stretched longer than a maximum length of the abdominal region as claimed.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

3. Claims 1, 4-8, and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Reising et al. USPN 4681580.

4. As to claim 1, Reising teaches a disposable wearing article 10 comprising a back region 30 having extensibility in the waist direction and provided with stopper members 38 at both ends in the waist direction; an abdominal region 31 provided with flap portions 39, 40, 41 at both ends in the waist direction; and an absorber 14 that bridges between the back region and the abdominal region, wherein a length of the back region in the waist direction when stretched would be longer than a maximum length of the abdominal region that can be achieved when the abdominal region is not stretched and

the length of the back region in the waist direction when no force is applied from an outside is almost equal to the length of the abdominal region in the waist direction when no force is applied to the abdominal region from the outside (Figure 1, col 10, lines 53-64)). Reising teaches the stretchable waist can be present on the front, back, or both waist regions (col. 6, lines 31-41). In the case of the waistband 18 present in the back region, the back region is stretched longer than a maximum length of the abdominal region as claimed.

As to claim 4, the back region includes a web for outer surface 16, a web for inner surface 12, and an elastic member 75/76 between the outer and inner surface

As to claim 5, a trimmed portion is provided on an inner edge of each of the both ends of the back region and an inner edge of the flap portions (Figure 1, edges 70, 17)

As to claim 6, a slanting portion is provided on an inner edge of each of the both ends of the back region and an inner edge of the flap portions (where leg curves are present, Figure 1)

As to claims 7 and 8, the stopper members 38 are temporarily held on the abdominal region to form the disposable wearing article into an underpants-shape, and the back region and the abdominal region are joined at an inside or outside from the stopper member (col. 10, lines 53-64). The limitations as to how the pants are joined are directed to an intended use of the garment. Intended use must result in a structural difference between the claimed invention and the prior art in order to patentably distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art. See *In re Casey*, 152 USPQ 235

(CCPA 1967) and *In re Otto*, 136 USPQ 458, 459 (CCPA 1963). If the prior art structure is capable of performing the intended use, then it meets the claim limitations.

As to claim 10, Reising teaches the stretchable waist can be present on the front, back, or both waist regions (col. 6, lines 31-41). In the case of the waistband 18 present in the back region, the abdominal region has substantially no extensibility in the waist direction.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Reising et al.

USPN 4681580. Reising discloses the present invention substantially as claimed.

However, Reising does not teach the claimed length of the flap portions. However, in *Gardner v. TEC Systems, Inc.*, 725 F.2d 1338, 220 USPQ 777 (Fed. Cir. 1984), *cert. denied*, 469 U.S. 830, 225 USPQ 232 (1984), the Federal Circuit held that, where the only difference between the prior art and the claims was a recitation of relative dimensions of the claimed device and a device having the claimed relative dimensions would not perform differently than the prior art device, the claimed device was not patentably distinct from the prior art device.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jacqueline F. Stephens whose telephone number is (571) 272-4937. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 9:00-5:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tanya Zalukaeva can be reached on (571) 272-1115. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Jacqueline F Stephens/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3761